

evidence that active transport of electrolytes may be important in clearing edema fluid from the air spaces of the normal sheep lung.<sup>15</sup> In addition, we have recently presented evidence that  $\beta$ -adrenergic therapy can augment alveolar liquid clearance in sheep.<sup>16</sup> Clearly, it is possible that type II epithelial cells may be important in removing alveolar edema, and it is also conceivable that injury to type II cells early in the course of the adult respiratory distress syndrome might result in a slower resolution of alveolar edema.

In summary, based on experimental and clinical studies, Mason is probably correct in postulating a major role for alveolar type II epithelial cells in both the evolution and resolution of this syndrome. It is also likely, however, that circulating neutrophils and monocytes that interact with resident cells of the lung (endothelial cells, alveolar macrophages and perhaps airway epithelial cells) are important in the pathogenesis as well as recovery from this syndrome.

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## Wouldn't It Be Wonderful!

THE POSSIBILITY OF NUCLEAR WAR, nuclear terrorism or even nuclear accidents weighs heavily on the world today, and this will continue for the foreseeable future. The nuclear genie is out of its bottle and there is no longer any way to get it back in. If humanity is to thrive, or even to survive, ways must be found to accommodate the ever present reality of the dual

threats—the possibility that nuclear force will be used to achieve someone's purpose or that purposeless nuclear accidents will occur with the accompanying though unwanted devastation.

As everyone knows, the nuclear arms race between the United States and the Soviet Union has been going on apace. It is generally conceded that both sides now have an ample supply of weapons—easily enough to destroy human civilization. Recently, with the ascent of Premier Gorbachev to power, the rhetoric from the Kremlin has changed and a unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing has been proclaimed. At this writing the rhetoric from Washington has not changed. It is obvious that everyone everywhere remains suspicious and skittish.

It is a fact that the arms race is a major economic drain on both the major powers. It is diverting resources from what both nations would like to be doing at home. It is also a fact that two very different ideologies are at odds, and that each would like to see its own prevail throughout the world. In one, state control is as absolute as possible, and this control is enforced by means of a police state. The belief is that the collective good of the state takes precedence over individual freedom. The other stands for democracy, individual freedom, with only sufficient government to protect the rights of all. Each ideology, in its own self interest, cannot afford to have the other become too dominant. And a third fact is that all of humanity, regardless of ideology, lives together on this planet, sometimes called Spaceship Earth, in which there is real and increasing human interdependence—biologic, technologic, ecologic, social, economic and political.

These facts are the realities to be dealt with. The approach is and has been competition between and among autonomous and independent entities, with huge amounts of resources going into the competition. As far as nuclear weapons are concerned there will be no winners. It seems inevitable that the facts and realities just described will sooner or later lead to a more cooperative approach among autonomous and independent persons, groups of persons, human institutions, governments and nations. As the reality of autonomy is better recognized there will be less tendency to impose one's will or ideology upon others, with some reduction in the root causes of conflict. Perhaps, if the door is even slightly open, there could be a cautious approach at the highest levels to an international philosophy of "live and let live," and more specifically toward agreement and trust that could lead to some gradual curtailment of nuclear weapons. We should beware of moving too rapidly. Neville Chamberlain thought he had negotiated "peace for our time" just before World War II broke out. But it is time for greater worldwide recognition that the rules of the game are going to have to change, and that cooperation rather than competition will have to be the way of the future. The realities of nuclear power, independent ideologies and human interdependence, and the corollary, the need to develop instruments of cooperation, should be recognized and encouraged at many levels of human interaction.

A new era of genuine cooperation! Wouldn't it be wonderful!

MSMW

*Subliminal Note:* Could there be a message here for medicine?